

Environmental Capacity Building in the Newly Independent States

General Information

Document Type: Grants Notice

Funding Opportunity Number:

Posted Date:

Original Due Date for Applications: June 11, 2004

Current Due Date for Applications: Extended to June 14, 2004

Archive Date:

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

Category of Funding Activity: Environment

CFDA Number: 66.931 – International Financial Assistance Projects
Sponsored by the Office of International Affairs

Cost Sharing: No

Eligible Applicants

State governments
County governments
City or township governments
Special district governments
State and Private institutions of higher education
Tribal governments (Federally recognized)
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS
Foreign governments
International nonprofit organizations
Individuals

Federal Agency Name

Environmental Protection Agency, Attn: Piper Stege, Office of International Affairs, MC
2650R, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460-0001

Description

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to build upon EPA's previous efforts to improve environmental protection by building capacity in the environmental sectors of the governments of Newly Independent States (NIS). These countries are responsible for very large emissions of pollutants. These emissions cause significant environmental and human health risks and are frequently transported over long distances. The overall benefit of this project to the NIS countries will be the successful application of modern environmental policies, approaches and analytical techniques to practical environmental decision-making for more successful environmental protection and environmental risk reduction in their countries.

Agency Contact Person for Electronic Access Problem

Piper Stege, Project Officer, Email stege.piper@epa.gov.

Link to Full Announcement

Overview Information

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of International Affairs

Funding Opportunity Title: Environmental Capacity Building with Governments of the Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union.

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 66.931 – International Financial Assistance Projects sponsored by EPA's Office of International Affairs

Dates: Extended June 14, 2004 deadline for all proposals to be postmarked.

All dates listed are by midnight, Eastern Standard Time.

Overview: This document is to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) through an open competition for EPA funds. The anticipated total award for the 5 year total period of performance is \$3,500,000. The initial first-year funding is for \$240,000 and additional incremental funding is subject to the availability of funds; this initial funding will be divided into approximately \$175,000 for activities in Ukraine and \$65,000 for activities in Russia (73% Ukraine and 17% Russia). These initial funds will support and enhance efforts to provide scientific, economic and environmental analytical assistance to build institutional capacity for environmental protection in Russia and Ukraine. While the initial funding is focused on work in Russia and Ukraine, the project could be extended to other NIS countries if funding is made available in the following years of the project.

Full Text

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Background

The countries of the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union still suffer from the severe consequences of massive industrial pollution produced by aging and inefficient industrial infrastructures. As these countries began to make their transition to market economies and to build market institutions in the late 1980's and early 1990's, their economies came under great pressure. After a significant economic adjustment period, a slow economic recovery began. Many of the main Government concerns in this period were slow economic growth and the associated rates of unemployment, inflation, and social problems.

Environmental concerns were less pressing due to the other more immediate concerns. In addition, the sharp production declines resulted in a reduction of all types of pollution, but these reductions were temporary. And pollution was not reduced in proportion to the decrease in Gross Domestic Product. The pre-existing industrial infrastructure is still a mainstay of the economies of the Region, and continues to be the cause of significant levels of air and water pollution, and hazardous wastes. As the economies in this region recover following the deep

economic crises of the 1990s, the risk of rapid pollution growth looms large.

Environmental Capacity Building

The EPA has implemented technical assistance programs on air pollution, water pollution, greenhouse gases, pesticides and hazardous wastes in many of the countries of this region. However, at this stage in NIS environmental development, the greatest improvement in environmental performance will result from better management of scarce resources and from technological modernization brought about by new investment. A proper environmental regulatory framework can improve both environmental management and financial decision making, while also encouraging modernization. In addition, improved and consistent assessment of environmental problems can help direct resources to those activities which yield the greatest environmental benefits. The goal of all improvements will be to better target reductions in environmental and human health risks at lower costs. Thus a focus of this overall effort should be on specific projects that provide hands-on opportunities to learn the practices that can lead to the reduction of high risk emissions.

This call for proposals focuses on assisting the governments of this region to institutionalize practices of modern environmental policy into their own environmental protection systems. These practices include: 1) setting environmental priorities through comparative environmental and health risk assessment, 2) creating regulatory impact analysis systems based on risk assessment and cost-benefit analyses, 3) using risk and economic analyses to illustrate the health and economic benefits of environmental pollution control, 4) implementing performance-based policy instruments, including learning such approaches as market trading and setting performance standards, and 5) helping the governments to institute greater transparency and participation of stakeholders in government decision-making. Implementation of these analytical practices should lead to reduced emissions of high-risk pollutants and contribute to clean air and clean water in the NIS.

Organizational Considerations

Proposals must address strategies, approaches and management issues for institutional environmental capacity building. The successful recipient should be prepared to work effectively with different levels of the various governments (e.g. national, regional, oblast, municipal) as appropriate to the achievements of the overall objectives. The countries of this region vary in their experiences with environmental policy and management, risk assessment and environmental economics. The recipient would be expected to review the current state of environmental practices and related assistance projects. Activities under this agreement need to be tailored to the culture and experience of each country and should maximize participation by appropriate government and non-government officials. EPA will provide technical assistance as necessary for the project, in partnership with the Governments and the recipient of this cooperative agreement.

The project could include seminars and workshops, as well as the creation of ongoing partnerships, to provide advice and assistance on environmental health and economic topics

through practical experience. There may also be opportunities for possible exchanges for government officials, private sector stakeholders and NGO technical specialists. Thus, the project should promote: a) building on results from previous technical assistance programs and projects; b) sharing of analytical tools and approaches used in the US and other regions with successful environmental protection; c) considering the efforts of multi-lateral organizations such as the World Bank and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; d) identifying critical opportunities for participation of stakeholders and the public, and e) benefiting from relevant experience from neighboring countries. The overall benefit of this project to the host countries will be their successful application of these techniques to practical environmental decision-making for more successful environmental protection in NIS countries.

II. Award Information

EPA anticipates a possible five-year project period, for a total amount of \$3,500,000. The initial first-year funding is for \$240,000 (\$175,000 for activities in Ukraine and \$65,000 for activities in Russia); additional incremental funding is subject to the availability of funds. EPA anticipates that the start date of this project would be no later than August 2004, and the period of performance for the initial funding would not exceed 24 months.

This award will be funded through a cooperative agreement and will include substantial involvement by EPA. Substantial involvement will include EPA approval of specific phases of the project before the recipient proceeds to the next phase; EPA will work with the grantee to approve key personnel; EPA will assist in some of the project activities; EPA will approve the workplan prior to the award agreement; EPA will monitor performance; EPA will review project results after completion of the work; EPA will ensure recipient compliance with statutes, regulations, policies and all requirements in the agreement, and review progress reports.

III. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

The eligible applicants are state governments, county governments, city or township governments, special district governments, State and Private institutions of higher education, tribal governments (Federally recognized), nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, foreign governments, international nonprofit organizations, and individuals.

Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for this project.

Other Eligibility Requirements

EPA expects to award Environmental Capacity Building in the Newly Independent States Grants under the following seven grant authorities: Clean Air Act section 103(b)(3); Clean Water Act

section 104 (b)(3); Resource Conservation and Recovery Act section 8001; Toxics Substances Control Act section 10; Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act section 20; Safe Drinking Water Act sections 1442(a) and (c); and National Environmental Policy Act section 102(2)(F).

In addition to the program criteria listed in the Criteria section below, a proposal must meet the following two important threshold criteria to be considered for funding:

Threshold Criterion #1. A project must consist of activities authorized under one or more of the seven EPA grant authorities cited above. Most of the statutes authorize grants for the following activities: "research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies." These activities relate generally to the gathering or transferring of information or advancing the state of knowledge. Grant proposals should emphasize this "learning" concept, as opposed to "fixing" an environmental problem via a well-established method. For example, a proposal to plant some trees in an economically depressed area in order to prevent erosion would probably not in itself fall within the statutory terms "research, studies, demonstrations," etc., nor would a proposal to start a routine recycling program. The project's activities must advance the state of knowledge or transfer information. The statutory term "demonstration" can encompass the first instance of the application of pollution control and prevention techniques, or an innovative application of a previously used method. The term "research" may include the application of established practices when they contribute to "learning" about an environmental concept or problem.

Threshold Criterion #2. In order to be funded, a project's focus generally must be one that is specified in the statutes listed above. For most of the statutes, a project must address the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of air, water, or solid/hazardous waste pollution, or, in the case of grants under the Toxic Substances Control Act or the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, to "carrying out the purposes of the Act." The overarching concern or principal focus of the grant proposals must be on the statutory purpose of the applicable grant authority, in most cases "to prevent or control pollution." In light of this, proposals relating to other topics which are sometimes included within the term "environment" such as recreation, conservation, restoration, protection of wildlife habitats, etc., should describe the relationship of these topics to the statutorily required purpose of pollution prevention and/or control.

Only one application per submitting entity will be considered.

IV. Initial Proposal and Submission Information

All applicants need to submit a complete application package, consisting of:

- The full grant application, found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/contents.htm>
- A completed project proposal, the format for which is below

The complete application package, with the EPA full grant application and proposal, must be postmarked by midnight on June 14, 2004, Eastern Standard Time (EST). During the review of proposals, EPA may request clarification on the submitted information. At a later stage, EPA will request a detailed workplan, complete with specific budget numbers and timelines.

Proposal Format

The proposal generally should provide EPA with a profile of the applicant, the purpose and anticipated results of your project, an explanation of how you plan to accomplish your project, and an estimate of the time and money needed to complete your project. Proposals that are inconsistent with the program goals or that contain unallowable costs and activities will be screened out of the review process.

The specific requirements for the proposal are:

- Proposals (not including the Full Grant Application) must be limited to no more than 10 pages. Page size must be 8 ½" by 11" with a font size of 12 points or larger.
- The proposal should include:
 - Narrative of project purpose and environmental results to be achieved by project, including expected project results, how they will be measured and how they relate to environmental improvements.
 - Brief description of the applicant organization, experience related to the areas of interest and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to implement the proposed project.
 - Brief description of staffing and funding resources available to implement the proposed project, including the number of workers and staff
 - Milestone Chart, including expected accomplishments and projected due dates for the expenditure of the initial \$240,000 (\$175,000 for work in Ukraine and \$65,000 for work in Russia) on activities anticipated to last no longer than 24 months. The same information should also be provided for second and third year activities should additional funds be available.
 - Description of how the proposed project meets the Ranking Criteria specified in this announcement.
 - Letters of commitment from project partners, if applicable.
- Proposals must be postmarked by 12 midnight (EST) on June 11, 2004 (NO fax submissions) to:

Piper Stege
Office of International Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W. (M.C. 2650R)
Washington, D.C. 20460

EPA Notifies Selectee: After the proposal is selected by EPA, we will notify the selectee within 30 days and request submission of a full grant application.

Submission Dates and Times

All proposals and applications must be postmarked by midnight, EST, June 14, 2004.

Late applications will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

Intergovernmental Review (Required)

Not applicable

Funding Restrictions

Not applicable

Other Submission Requirements

Not applicable

V. Proposal Review Information

Criteria

EPA will evaluate and rank proposals for funding recommendations using the following criteria (100 points total)

1. Proposal concept – Proposal demonstrates in-depth understanding of modern environmental policy and management and its core analytical techniques and processes. Ideally, the proposal should address activities to be undertaken with initial funding, as well as activities to be undertaken in the context of the overall project. Consideration will also be given for potential to build on previous, related projects in this region. (30 points)
2. Proposal Methodology – Proposal clearly demonstrates a logical and meritorious method of conducting the work of the proposed project, the partners that will be used, and specific responsibilities of each entity participating in the proposed project. Proposal develops a timeline that makes sense and is achievable. (10 points)
3. Technical Experience – Proposal demonstrates that the organization has qualified technical capacity for carrying out the work. Proposal includes convincing information that the proposing organization has experience working with the analytical techniques of modern environmental policy and management and has experience advising governments in environmental policy. (30 points)

4. Proposal Cost-effectiveness - Proposal includes a cost-effective budget to achieve project goals. Work described is achievable with available funding. (10 points)
5. Regional Experience – The proposal should demonstrate that the proposing organization either has successful experience or the high potential for establishing such experience, in working with environment and related ministries of governments of the countries of the former Soviet Union. (20 points)

Maximum score: 100 points

Review and Selection Process

The review and selection of proposals will be conducted by a panel of EPA international assistance, capacity building, and environmental policy experts.

Any disputes will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR Part 31, subpart F.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

VI. Award Administration Information

Award Notification

After the deadline for the initial proposals has passed, EPA will acknowledge receipt of proposals by postal mail. Once proposals are reviewed, evaluated and ranked, a final selection will be made. The successful applicant will complete and submit an application for federal assistance. All other applicants will be notified within 30 days after award. The notification will be made electronically or via postal service depending on how the application was submitted to EPA.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All applicants must complete an application for federal assistance, available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/contents.htm>, prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10). In addition, the successful applicant will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR 32.

Confidentiality

Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency Regulations at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B.

Reporting Requirements

Quarterly project status reports, a final project report, and final Financial Status Report will be

required. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide EPA with information about project development and cost. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

VII. Agency Contact

Piper Stege
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W. (M.C. 2650R)
Washington, D.C. 20460

Email: stege.piper@epa.gov